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XIII.—*An Oological Journey to Russia.*

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BEING anxious to obtain certain further details respecting European oology, I decided to visit Finland and Russia during last spring, and to examine several of the largest egg-collections in those countries. I left Hull for Helsingfors on the 18th of May and arrived on the 23rd, having stayed for half a day at Copenhagen on the way. At Helsingfors I at once looked up my old friend Professor Palmén; but the series of eggs in the Museum there is not large and contains little of interest, though Mr. I. A. Sandman, an old correspondent of mine, has a very good collection, which I spent the best part of a day in inspecting. He has collected in various parts of Finland, and has several clutches of the eggs of *Emberiza rustica* taken in North-East Finland, besides specimens of those of *Cuculus canorus* from nests of *Saxicola ænanthe*, *Ruticilla phœnicurus*, *Fringilla montifringilla*, *Turdus pilaris*, and *Anthus cervinus*. After spending three days at Helsingfors I went to Tammefors to visit Dr. Hougberg, who has, perhaps, the largest oological collection in Finland. His country-house is beautifully situated on a well-wooded tongue of land jutting out into the lake, and in most of

the trees he has placed nesting-boxes, which have been well tenanted; several have been occupied by *Muscicapa atricapilla*. Dr. Hougberg's collection is especially rich in eggs taken in Finland and in varieties. It contains twenty clutches of eggs of *Aquila chrysaëtus*, some of which shew exceptionally fine coloration. Amongst the varieties in the collection I noticed a clutch of eggs of *Strepsilas interpres* very richly marked on a pale grey ground, another of *Numenius phaeopus*, recalling certain eggs of *Larus canus* in general character, a third of *Limosa lapponica* very slightly spotted on a pale greenish-grey ground, and two eggs of *Grus communis*, unusually darkly marked on a greenish ground.

On the 27th of May I left Dr. Hougberg's hospitable quarters to visit Mr. Schoultz, arriving at Humpela after a journey of five hours by rail. Mr. Schoultz's collection has been chiefly formed by himself in Finland, and he was, I believe, the first oologist who found the Rustic Bunting breeding in the north-east of that country. He shewed me on the map the exact localities where the bird has been met with in the breeding-season, and offered, if I could spare a fortnight, to take me to find a nest or two, but, unfortunately, I could not accept his kind proposal. In his collection I saw a clutch of four eggs of *Nucifraga caryocatactes* taken in Finland between Raumo and Nystad, a clutch of four of those of *Tringa minuta* from Utsjoki, one unspotted egg of *Colymbus arcticus* and one only slightly spotted on a greyish-blue-green ground. Besides these there were several very well-marked clutches of eggs of *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* taken in Finland, many fine varieties of those of *Falco aesalon*, one particularly dark clutch of those of *Emberiza rustica*, and several eggs of *Saxicola oenanthe* and *Muscicapa atricapilla* finely but distinctly dotted with red. In the collection were a good many eggs obtained in exchange from other parts of Europe, but none of them were of much value, and some seemed to me rather doubtful.

After spending a couple of days with Mr. Schoultz, I travelled on to Wiborg to pass a short time with my old friend Mr. W. Hackman, arriving there on the 29th of May. I

found Mr. Hackman at his country-seat of Hertuala, a lovely place on the shore of the Saima Lake, where I lived when I first visited Finland as a lad in 1856. I intended to stay there at least a week, but on the following day I received a telegram from Dr. Bianchi asking me to come to St. Petersburg as soon as possible, as he was starting almost at once for a trip in the country, so I arranged to leave by the night-train on the 1st of June. At Hertuala I visited several of the places I formerly knew so well, when I spent the whole of the summer there in 1856 and collected birds and eggs. The old tree in which I then found the Great Black Woodpecker breeding was still standing, with several more holes in it, but I did not see the birds. The gardener, however, told me that they were there in the previous year, but that he had not observed them since. *Oriolus galbula* still frequents the gardens, as do many other birds I used to see when formerly in the district. On my arrival at St. Petersburg I went at once to the Museum, where I found Dr. Bianchi, who was most friendly, and afforded me every facility. He had looked out all the eggs obtained on the Taimyr Peninsula and the New Siberian Islands, so that I could examine them at my ease, and among them I was able, for the first time, to examine authentic eggs of the Knot (*Tringa canutus*), obtained by the late Dr. Walter. Dr. Walter's assistant was in St. Petersburg at the time, so Dr. Bianchi sent for him in order that I might learn further particulars from his own lips. I ascertained from him that only one clutch of three eggs of *Tringa canutus*, No. 70 (*cf.* Ibis, 1904, p. 233), obtained by Dr. Walter, was thoroughly authenticated, by the parent bird being shot on leaving the nest. These specimens agreed well with the description which I translated and gave in 'The Ibis,' as above quoted. Of the eggs of *Calidris arenaria* there were several clutches not shewing any great variation, besides several of *Tringa subarquata* obtained by Dr. Walter, all resembling those found by Mr. H. L. Popham and figured by Prof. Newton (P. Z. S. 1897, pl. li. figs. 1-4). Amongst them were several beautiful varieties.

I ascertained that Mr. H. Goebel's collection, which was offered to Prof. Newton and myself, had found a home in the Museum, and as it was said to contain two clutches of eggs of *Tringa subarquata*, which we supposed to be referable to *Tringa striata*, I examined and compared them with those obtained by Dr. Walter. One of them is, I believe, undoubtedly correct, but the other is not, and the egg more nearly resembles certain specimens of that of *Calidris arenaria*. In the Museum I also examined the following eggs:—Of the Pheasants those of *Phasianus persicus*, *P. strauchi*, *P. mongolicus*, *P. tarimensis*, *P. chrysomelas*, and *P. principalis*, all resembling those of *Phasianus colchicus*, though those of *P. tarimensis* were rather rufous in tinge, and those of *P. chrysomelas* were rather greyish. Three eggs of *Grus nigricollis* were of the usual Crane-type, though very dark, but the others were paler.

Wild-taken specimens of the eggs of *Grus leucogeranus* closely resembled those laid in the aviary at Lilford Hall, but the markings were rather more purple in tinge. Eggs of *Tetraophasis obscurus* were creamy white with pale rufous spots or nearly obsolete markings; in general appearance they resembled those of *Tetrao urogallus*, but were paler.

Eggs of *Perdix sifanica* resembled those of *Perdix cinerea*, some being greyer and others more rufous.

Eggs of *Ithaginis sinensis* from Szechuen were creamy white, with rich blackish surface-spots and blotches.

Eggs of *Ciconia boyciana* were all like those of *Ciconia alba*, but were, if anything, a trifle larger.

Eggs of *Podoces hendersoni* were pale greenish grey, finely spotted with pale rufous, and recalled some varieties of those of *Turdus viscivorus*.

Eggs of *Podoces pleskii* obtained by Mr. Zarudny were pale greenish grey, with pale dull brownish spots, generally spread over the surface, and recalled some varieties of those of *Lanius excubitor*.

Eggs of *Merula kessleri* were pale greenish grey with a bluish tinge, some darker, some paler, spotted all over the

surface with small wood-brown spots ; they much resembled those of *Turdus merula*.

Eggs of *Melanocorypha maxima* resembled those of *Melanocorypha calandra*, but were larger and darker.

Eggs of *Melanocorypha mongolica* collected by Prjevalski were of the *Calandra* type, and one clutch had dull wood-brown spots, almost confluent at the larger end.

Eggs of *Luscinola armandi* were white, with pale red spots, and somewhat resembled those of certain Titmice, but the spots were paler.

Eggs of *Acrocephalus agricola* obtained by Mr. Zarudny were greenish white, closely marked with dark greenish brown.

Eggs of *Calliope tschebaievi* were very pale uniform blue, unmarked.

All the eggs of *Babax lanceolatus* were of a rich dark blue, darker in tone than those of *Accentor modularis*, and unspotted.

Eggs of *Bucanetes mongolicus* were white, with a faint bluish tinge, sparingly dotted at the larger end with black.

Eggs of *Montifringilla davidiana* were, like all the eggs of *Montifringilla* and *Leucosticte* which I have seen, pure white, and measured about 20 by 14 mm.

Only one clutch of the eggs of *Pterorhinus davidi* was in the Museum ; these were pale blue, marked with small black spots and with a wreath of black scratches and wavy lines round the larger end.

Two eggs of *Trochalopteron elliotti* from Kan-su resembled the foregoing, but were much less marked.

Synthliborhamphus antiquus deposits two eggs in a hole in the ground, which, as shown by von Schrenck ('Vögel des Amur-Landes,' Taf. xvi. figs. 2, 3), are dissimilar, one being pale olive-brown sparsely spotted with underlying lilac-grey and dull brown surface-spots, the other having the ground-colour pale greyish clay or creamy, not olive-brown.

I had not time to examine any birds, and not even all the eggs that I wished to see, as Dr. Bianchi was obliged to leave St. Petersburg on the 4th of June, but he shewed me a

series of skins of *Koslowia (Leucosticte) roborowskii* and *Otocorys teleschowi*, both excellent species, and also three specimens of *Emberiza koslowi* from Tibet.

I spent an evening after leaving the Museum with Mr. Alfaraki, and another with Mr. H. Goebel, and the latter shewed me a collection of eggs made in the Minsinsk District, Yenesei Government, Siberia, between the head-waters of the Yenesei and Irkutsk, which I eventually purchased, as it contained those of several species which I wanted, amongst them being clutches of *Carpodacus roseus*, *Uragus sibiricus*, *Motacilla leucopsis*, and *Emberiza aureola*, with the nests; and eggs of *Falco amurensis*, *Turdus obscurus*, *Muscicapa luteola*, *Anthus richardi*, *Gallinago megala*, *Gallinago solitaria*, *Grus monachus*, and so forth.

I spent some time also with Dr. Bianchi in the new Museum, where the arrangements are excellent. The cases, about nine feet square or more, shewing birds in their haunts, with all the surroundings carefully reproduced, are especially fine, as are also the larger cases with groups of the Urus, Wild Horse, and Wild Camel; but the gem of the collection is the huge plate-glass case containing the last-obtained specimen of the Mammoth, stuffed, with all the surroundings carefully reproduced as they were found. The skeleton is set up close by, and in another case are the stomach, intestines, &c., which have all been carefully preserved.

After calling to see some old friends in the town, I left St. Petersburg on the 4th of June for Wesenberg, in Esthonia, to visit Mr. Buturlin, the well-known Russian ornithologist and traveller, arriving there the next morning. That day and the following we spent in looking at the birds in his collection, and he then proposed that we should visit some small islands in the Gulf of Finland. We accordingly started early the next morning for Kunda, a little port, where we arrived before noon, and called on Mr. Stepanoff, the chief of the Customs, who made us very welcome and offered us his steam-launch. After an early dinner he and two other friends joined us, and we all started for the largest

island, Goft, where birds are most plentiful. On our arrival we found a dozen fishermen who had been camping there for three days, and as they had evidently been living to a large extent on eggs (judging from the quantity of shells near their camp-fire), none were left, though we saw many birds. This island was about three-quarters of a mile long, rocky and sandy, with a few bushes in the middle. Here we saw a pair of Greenshanks which had evidently been nesting, but of course we found no eggs. We then went to the second and rather smaller island some distance away. This was also composed of sand and heavy stones, with grass and low bushes in many places, and here we found *Ægialitis hiaticula*, *Strepsilas interpres*, *Motacilla alba*, *Ædemia fusca*, *Sterna fluviatilis*, *Larus canus*, and *Larus cachinnans*, many of them with eggs. Altogether there are three uninhabited islands in the group, but we did not visit the third and smallest, as we returned to Kunda for supper. The next day we spent in skinning the birds and blowing the eggs that we had obtained at the Goft Islands; in the evening we returned to Wesenberg. Mr. Buturlin is not an egg-collector, but he had a small collection which had been made at the mouth of the Petchora River by a young naval officer, Mr. Novosiltzeff, out of which he kindly gave me a clutch of eggs of *Squatarola helvetica* and two eggs of *Cygnus bewicki*.

Baron Harald Loudon had invited us to spend a few days at his place in Livonia, so we left Wesenberg on the evening of the 10th of June and arrived at Wolmar early the next morning. Here we had a pleasant drive of about two hours through a pretty and well-wooded country to Lisdén, the Baron's estate, in his carriage, a regular Russian equipage with four horses abreast. Baron Loudon has travelled much in Transcaucasia and Central Asia, and has a very large and rich collection of Palearctic bird-skins and one room filled with mounted birds, while there are horns in most of the sitting-rooms. The Baron has an interesting collection of photographs taken by himself on his journeys and a considerable number of curiosities of various kinds.

The weather was very fine, so we spent part of the day out of doors, where we saw *Buteo zimmermannæ*, *Coracias garrulus*, and many other more common birds; *Corpodacus erythrinus* is often seen in the garden, but we did not observe it there.

The Baron had a small egg-collection, but there was not much in it of interest to me, except a few eggs from Transcaspia, any of which, he told me, I could have. I selected several, and amongst them was one of *Gecinus flavirostris*, which I believe is the only authentic specimen known, for when Messrs. Loudon and Zarudny met with this Woodpecker all the nests contained young birds, except one, in which an addled egg was found: this was not discoloured and they were able to blow it. The next day we visited a wood about six miles distant, where we saw a nest of *Aquila pomarina*, which was not presently tenanted, though we noticed a pair of the birds. We also saw several Buzzards' nests and one of a Goshawk. When crossing a deep wide ditch in a wood a bird flew out nearly under our feet and the Baron shot it; it proved to be a female Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*). The nest was in a depression or shallow hole in the side of the ditch and contained five incubated eggs, four of which I was able to blow. The nest was at the foot of a tiny spruce sapling about a foot high.

In another wood we found a Buzzard's nest in a high pine-tree, so the keeper went and brought back a boy, who climbed the tree and found that the nest contained two young birds in down and one egg. As the Buzzards here are supposed to be *Buteo zimmermannæ*, the Baron shot one of the parents, and photographed both this nest and that of *Turdus iliacus*. The Buzzard had the upper parts as in typical *B. vulgaris*, but paler and tinged with rufous on the neck, while the under parts were rufous-buff, the throat striated and the abdomen barred; the tail was, however, not rufous, but as in typical *B. vulgaris*. I examined the series of Buzzards in Baron Loudon's collection, and must say that the so-called *B. zimmermannæ* seems to be a very doubtful and variable species.

The following day we all three drove over to Burtnek, to visit Herr von Schröder, whose place, said to be the

finest in Livonia, is beautifully situated at the end of the Burtnek See, a lake about fifteen versts long by ten wide. After an early lunch we started in a large boat, with four men to row us, up the lake, to visit one or two small islands. On the way I was shewn a spot where *Haliaëtus albicilla* nests every year in an old tree. The water was high, so the islets were smaller than usual.

We met with many *Sterna fluviatilis*, though most of their eggs had been sucked by Crows, plenty of Reed-Warblers, half a dozen nests of *Podiceps cristatus* and one of *Anas boscas*. We returned to Burtnek in time to partake of a luxurious supper. The following day we drove back to Lisdén.

All the next morning I worked at birds, and afterwards at luncheon we were joined by Baron Kruedener, a well-known sportsman, who remained for the rest of the day. Mr. Buturlin had to return home, but I remained at Lisdén until the 17th of June, when I was obliged to go to Riga to have my passport viséd. As already stated, Baron Loudon's egg-collection was small, but his bird-collection very rich in series. I noticed that *Deudrocopus leucopterus* from Transcaspia was readily distinguishable from *D. leptorhynchus* from the Syr-Darja, but that specimens from Ferghana were intermediate. *Ciconia azareth* Severtz. seemed to be a fairly good subspecies and always had the bill larger and stouter. The series of *Turdus atrigularis* was particularly fine. One male had the breast-shield very black, the rest of the under parts pure white, and the upper parts, wings, and tail isabelline. *Athene caucasica*, *Coracias semenovi*, *Otocorys pallida*, *O. iranica*, and *O. balcanica*, all of which I examined, seem to me to be very doubtful subspecies. *Passer simplex* var. *zarudnyi* from Transcaspia did not appear to me to differ from *Passer simplex* from North Africa, but unfortunately there were no African specimens to compare it with. *Troglodytes pallidus* from Transcaspia differs from typical *Troglodytes parvulus* only in being paler, with a more slender bill, and the under parts somewhat greyer and more closely barred.

I examined a good series of Magpies, and *Pica bactriana*

appears to me to be intermediate between *Pica leucoptera* and *Pica rustica*, but varies greatly in the amount of white on the quills. Specimens from Transcaspia labelled *Pica bactriana* all had the tail less glossed with green and almost uniform in colour, whereas *P. rustica* has a distinct purple band at the end of it, but Persian specimens were intermediate as regards the coloration of the tail.

Scops Owls from Transcaspia, which Baron Loudon said he was going to describe as a subspecies and to name *Scops turanica*, differed but slightly from *Scops gin* in being less grey and more rufous in coloration. A female measured: culmen 1.1 in., wing 5.9, tail 3.0, tarsus 0.5.

Athene caucasica Zarudn. & Loud. differs from *A. bactriana* in having the upper parts darker, the head more clearly spotted, and the under parts more closely and boldly striped. *Astur cenchroides* differs very slightly from *Astur brevipes* in having a slightly longer and somewhat more barred tail.

I examined and took notes on several more species and subspecies in the collection, but will not weary the readers of this article by giving my notes *in extenso*. After leaving Liden and my hospitable host and hostess, I spent one day in seeing Riga, and then returned direct to England, *via* Eydtkuhnen and Berlin, having had a most enjoyable holiday.

XIV.—*On the Discovery of the Nest and Eggs of the Solitary Sandpiper* (*Totanus solitarius*). By the Rev. FRANCIS C. R. JOURDAIN, M.A.

As little has hitherto been recorded with regard to the breeding-habits of the Solitary Sandpiper (*Totanus solitarius*), perhaps a few details of the recent discovery of its nest and eggs may be of interest to English ornithologists.

Early in the year 1903 Mr. Walter Raine, of Toronto, engaged Mr. Evan Thomson to collect for him in Northern Alberta. At the close of the season Mr. Thomson's field-